

CentTemp record

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Erwin J. Gay

JOHN HAMILTON, JR. — MARY McDONALD

115 Brookwood Dr.

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She was the Third Lady into Provo River Valley

He built the 1st rock house in the Fort in Wasatch Co.

John Hamilton, Jr. was born Aug. 6, 1834 in Hillsborough, County Down, Ireland, the third son of John Hamilton and Mary Creighton. His parents were devout members of the Church of England until they heard the gospel of Jesus Christ brought to them in 1841 by Elder Theodore Curtis. They accepted the message gladly and were baptized by him on Nov. 2, 1841.

William, their eldest son, had died in Ireland about 1838 when eight years of age, leaving them only sons Samuel and John, Jr. The father worked at the trade of "white-smith," a term applied to tool-makers in Ireland.

After acceptance of the gospel the Hamilton family was eager to depart for America to join with the saints in Nauvoo, and this they did on the last day of December 1842. It was only an over-night trip by sea to Liverpool, England, but they waited there until Jan. 16, 1843, before departing aboard the sail boat *Swanton of Bath*.

Their ocean voyage ended just two months later at New Orleans, Louisiana. Here they boarded the steamboat *Goddess of Liberty*, that

carried passengers and freight on the Mississippi River under guidance of Captain Davenport. This was one of the largest river boats, so as they neared Nauvoo it was necessary to take a smaller boat to enter the harbor of Commerce. They were obliged to wait on the river eleven days for the ice in the harbor to break up.

It was an exhilarating experience for this group of sea-weary saints to be met at the pier on April 11, 1843, by their Prophet Joseph Smith together with his brother Hyrum and Heber C. Kimball. Construction of many buildings was in progress in Nauvoo and tools were badly needed. John Hamilton went to work immediately to help supply the need.

That summer John Hamilton, Jr. aged nine years was baptized in the Mississippi River. A few months later his father was ordained a member of the 9th Quorum of Seventy. On Dec. 22, 1844 both his father and mother received their Patriarchial Blessings from John Smith. They were a devout, happy family enjoying their part in the phenomenal growth of Nauvoo.

But John Hamilton, Jr. tells his own story in a concise, genealogical style. He wrote:

I was born in Hillsborough, County of Down, Ireland August 6, 1834. Sailed with my father and mother to America Dec. 31, 1842. Landed in Liverpool, England Jan. 1, 1843 and continued our journey Jan. 16, 1843. Arrived in Nauvoo Apr. 18, 1843.

I was baptized when 9 years old by Elder Theodore Curtis in the Mississippi River. I lived with my parents in Nauvoo until the mob drove us out in October 1846. We lay on the banks of the Mississippi River and my father took down with chills and fever. We had to catch quail to live on. They came in droves and we could catch them, and we could see the hand of the Lord in it.

A man by the name of Henry Black came from Missouri and asked father about being a blacksmith, said he wanted to get one to come out to Missouri to work. Father said he was a smith, but, says he, "I am a Mormon and your people don't like them."

Mr. Black said if he minded his own business the people would respect him. Then father told him that the mob had taken his horses and he had no way to go out. Mr. Black said he would go home but would be back in a week with a team. So in a week he came and we went home with him.

We were well treated and father built him a shop. We lived there three and a half years and made an outfit for the mountains. Landed in Salt Lake City Sept. 18, 1850. Father bought a city lot and built an adobe house, then went to work at the Public Blacksmith Shop.

My brother Samuel Hamilton volunteered to go with George A. Smith to settle Parowan. He left Dec. 20, 1850 with enough adobes to build a small house. He arrived there Jan. 16, 1851. Father worked in the shop until Oct. 1851 when he sold out and moved to Parowan where we lived until Nov. 1852 when we moved to what was called Shirts Creek in Iron County. We lived there until July 1853 when the Indian trouble commenced.

We moved to Cedar City and I was called on to be a Minute Man. We had to do duty as a soldier and tend to gathering our crops at the same time which was hard. Get home from the field at ten o'clock at night and then stand guard two or three hours every other night. This continued until the spring of 1854 when peace was established.

On Oct. 1, 1854 I married the 3rd daughter of James and Sarah McDonald. Her name was

Mary. We were married in Springville and moved to Cedar City and lived there until the spring of 1856 when we moved to Shirts Creek, building a Fort 96 feet square and 3 feet thick.

In the fall of 1856 I was called to Salt Lake City to help bring some of the Handcart brothers and sisters to Cedar City. I arrived home on Dec. 13, 1856 after a hard cold journey. Our first child was born Dec. 15th, 1856 and we named him John Creighton Hamilton. On July 4, 1858 another son was born to us and we named him William Hamilton.

I made my living by farming. In the fall of 1858 we moved to Springville for the winter, and in the spring of 1859 my wife and two small children moved with me to Provo Valley (now Heber City). My wife was the third woman in the valley. We helped to build up the place. I was the first sheriff of the County and served five years. I took up land and built the first rock house in the city of Heber.

On Oct. 15, 1860 another son was born to us and we named him James McDonald Hamilton. On Jan. 14, 1863 another son was born to us and we named him Samuel Abel Hamilton. On Apr. 24, 1865 another son was born to us and we named him Robert Hamilton.

Indian trouble broke out and we had to herd our stock and hunt for Indians. We had to go armed to the canyons and everywhere we went. On April 11, 1867 a daughter was born to us and we named her Mary Luvina Jane Hamilton.

In the spring of 1868 the grasshoppers took our crops (in Provo Valley), so I took a four mule team and went down East for freight, came home in August, and in September the same year I went to work for the railroad. In Nov. the same year I went to Iron County to visit my father and mother and stay the winter.

They persuaded me to move down and live there and comfort them in their old age. Nov. 25, 1869, another daughter was born to us (at Hamilton's Fort) and we named her Sarah Eliza Hamilton.

In the spring of 1870 I took a mail contract to carry the United States mail from Cedar to St. George twice a week. In 1872 we carried three times a week until the summer of 1874 when another party got the contract. I built a large brick house and devoted my time to farming and teaming.

Our oldest son married Betsy Ann Klingensmith in the St. George Temple June 26, 1877. We lived at Hamilton Fort until I buried my father and mother. Our daughter Mary L. Jane

died there in Oct. 1890. We had twelve children then. The additional ones were: Margaret Francis born Oct. 19, 1871, Emma Elizabeth born Jan. 30, 1874, Rachel Jemerson born Jan. 8, 1876, Joseph Laysen born Feb. 13, 1880, and Andrew Henry born Jan. 22, 1882, which son died Mar. 18, 1883.

I lost my health, so in the year 1891 we moved back to Heber City. I bought a farm three miles south of town in Buysville. In Jan. 1892, I was ordained to the office of a High Priest under the hands of Apostle F. M. Lyman. In the same year I was set apart as first counselor to Presiding Elder William McGhie in a branch of the Charleston Ward. I have been a teacher in the Sunday School of Buysville ever since.

Our daughter Emma Elizabeth was married to George F. Giles in the Logan Temple Jan. 18, 1893. Sarah Eliza was married to George McDonald in the Salt Lake Temple Oct. 31, 1894. Rachel Jemerson was married to John W. Bell in the Salt Lake Temple Oct. 16, 1895. Margaret Francis was married to William Stephenson at the home of her parents in Buysville by Bishop Murdock Sept. 14, 1896.

A ward was organized in Buysville Nov. 12, 1898, and I was set apart as Ward Clerk which office I held until I moved away after the death of my wife, Dec. 3, 1899.

In the spring of 1900 I went to Idaho to spend the summer arriving home in July where I remained until Nov. 15 when I went to Iron County to spend the winter with my son John Creighton and his family, arriving home again Mar. 25, 1901.

May 15, 1901, I was married in the Salt Lake Temple to Janet Cochran, John R. Windor performing the ceremony making us man and wife for time and all eternity. Janet died in Heber City Feb. 7, 1912.

I then went to Montana to live with my daughter Rachel Jemerson Bell until July 12, 1913, when I came back to Heber City. I then went to Bingham to live with my daughter Emma Elizabeth Giles Murray where I am still living comfortable.

John Hamilton died Apr. 9, 1917, in Heber City at the home of his daughter, Sarah Hamilton McDonald. He was 82 years old and had been ill only about three weeks. His funeral was conducted in the Heber 2nd Ward chapel and his fellow Indian War veterans attended in a body. Nine of his twelve children survived him. His obituary stated, "He was a fine old gentleman — religious but not sanctimonious."

Mary McDonald Hamilton, third daughter of James McDonald and Sarah Ferguson was born

Oct. 4, 1838, at Crawfordsburn, County of Down, Ireland, and came to America with her parents when she was not yet six years old. She was only a little girl of eight years when the family was driven from Nauvoo, and for the remainder of her life-time she knew from personal experience the meaning of pioneering.

Mary celebrated her twelfth birthday shortly after arrival in Great Salt Lake City. She was old enough to be useful in establishing the family at Alpine, Utah County, Utah, that autumn of 1850. She was living in Springville by her 13th birthday, and both her sisters had married that year of 1851.

Mary was married Oct. 1, 1854, to John Hamilton, Jr. in her mother's home in Springville. That was three days before her 16th birthday. John Hamilton had arrived from southern Utah with Mary's brother William and wife, Sariah. John was going to Conference so he no doubt took his young bride with him.

The families of the bride and groom had known each other in Ireland where both were among the converts to Mormonism. John and Mary had known each other as children in Nauvoo. They had crossed the plains the same year.

John and Mary went to Cedar City in the autumn of 1854 and lived there until 1856 when they moved to what became known as Hamilton's Fort. Two years later they came to Springville where they stayed the winter, moving the following spring to what is now Heber City. With two little children and not yet 21 years old, Mary was one of the three women who spent the winter of 1859 in Provo Valley.

There was danger from Indians, but that was nothing new to Mary. Such danger had been even greater in southern Utah and her husband then and had been often away. Mary and John were in Heber City ten years before going back to Hamilton's Fort. There were six children to take on this move and their seventh one was born shortly after they were settled there.

They remained in southern Utah 21 years, the longest time they were ever stationary. In the autumn of 1891, after both parents of John were dead, the family returned again to Heber City and settled on a farm at Buysville. Their family had grown to 12 children, the youngest of whom had died when less than a year old. Their 23 year old eldest daughter had died the year before (1890). Four of their sons had married and were settled in homes of their own.

But with six children ranging in age from 33 years to 11 years of age, theirs was a sizable caravan. The early years of their return to

Provo Valley marked the zenith of their family life. One daughter was married in 1893, another in 1894 and another in 1895. Those were busy, happy years.

Everywhere she lived Mary contributed towards making the wilderness blossom like a rose. Her daughter-in-law wrote of her energetic ways: "Mary, being a large woman weighing over 200 pounds, could milk the cows, make three cheeses, 30 pounds of butter, ride a horse eight miles to sell them, wash on the board, cook for 13 people, and then after a few minor things call it a day."

The following humorous story is told of this pioneer couple. John Hamilton who wore a long beard was once attacked head-on by a skunk, and when he returned home he was rejected by his wife. He sought refuge at the home of his daughter, Sarah, but she, too, asked the old gentleman to leave. It took tall talk to get him reinstated at home — talk along with strong soap, lots of rose-water and glycerine, but mostly just time.

In addition to their own 12 children John and Mary adopted an Indian child who became known as Anna Mennorow Hamilton. When Anna was eighteen months old her Indian parents traded for for a pony because food for the Piute tribe was scarce at that time and Anna could not walk fast enough to keep up with the others. Mary Lavina

Jane, the Hamilton's first daughter, was just a year old at this time; so Mary Lavina Jane and Anna grew up together. The Indian mother came often to see her child and bring gifts of pine nuts.

Anna was baptized at eight years of age, and in her early teens, determined to have an education, Anna went to Cedar City and did house work in homes for board and room while she attended school. In later years she came to Salt Lake City and specialized in home economics. She became celebrated as a cook and professional housekeeper.

In 1898 Mary Hamilton's health broke. After months of suffering she sent for Anna who dutifully came and cared for her foster mother until her death Dec. 3, 1899. William, the Hamilton's second son, had never married so to him his mother's death was especially tragic.

In the last weeks of her illness Mary was taken to the home of her daughter Sarah in Heber City. Of the children of James McDonald and Sarah Ferguson who grew to adulthood, Mary was the first to die. Her two sisters and three of her four brothers were at her funeral in the Heber Second Ward. She was buried in the Heber City cemetery.